

## Miners' Rescue Station



The decision to build a rescue station at the foot of West House Lane, on the road from South Moor to Craghead, is first mentioned in the South Moor Colliery viewer's report of 1912. The viewer managed all underground and surface working at the colliery and he had to comply with the Coal Mines Act, 1911, which required all mine owners to establish rescue stations, provide teams of trained rescuers, and to keep and maintain rescue apparatus. The 1911 Act followed several mining disasters including the West Stanley Burns pit explosion of 1909 in which 168 miners died.

The cost of the building at Hustledown and its equipment, estimated at £2,300, was shared between the South Moor Colliery Company and Thomas Hedley and Brothers. The rescue centre was intended to train the men belonging to both companies and there were to be at least five Rescue Brigades.



In April 1913 the viewer reported on the success of the local ambulance classes. South Moor had 282 fully qualified ambulance men and 42 of these had over three years' experience. By 1914 sixty-two men had passed the necessary examinations to qualify as members of a Rescue Brigade. A year later the effect of the war was evident, as the Stanley News of 16 September 1915 reported:

"It has been decided not to hold the annual ambulance competition this year for the cup presented by the South Moor Coal Co. A large number of Moor ambulance men are now putting their training to good use on the battlefield and in the hospitals, and as only two teams entered their names for the Colliery Competition it was impossible to proceed with it."

However, the men's lectures and classes continued as usual and ladies' ambulance and nursing classes started at the same time.



Welfare Hospital opening ceremony, from the Stanley News, 3 February 1922, p.10

## Welfare Hospital

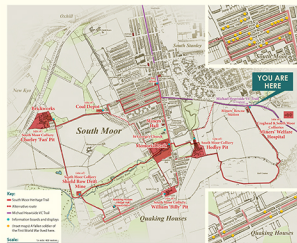
The Welfare Hospital of the Craghead and South Moor Collieries was formally opened by James Robson, president of the Durham Miners' Association, on Saturday 29 January 1922. At the ceremony the South Moor Band was headed by a new lodge banner, the front depicting the new hospital.

Built by Messrs Thomas Lumson, of Newcastle, from designs prepared by Messrs Buckland and Haywood, Birmingham, the hospital cost over £24,000. The scheme, approved in 1922, was funded by the recently introduced Miners' Welfare Levy, paid by the colliery owners, and weekly contributions from miners' wages.



Construction started in 1925 and bricks for the building came from the colliery brickworks.

The hospital, for the use of miners, their wives and children, had over 30 beds, an operating theatre and a special room for x-ray and artificial sun lamp. It was administered by a local committee until taken over by the National Health Service in 1948.



## South Moor Heritage Trail

South Moor and Quaking Houses were typical colliery villages that developed before and just after the First World War, around four collieries of William Hedley's South Moor Colliery Company.

South Moor Heritage trail is a five mile circular walk around key eight heritage sites of South Moor and Quaking Houses that existed during or soon after the First World War. Each site is marked by an interpretation board detailing the significance and heritage of the site. Each interpretation board is linked via a QR code to a South Moor heritage website providing further information about the history of the site. Rights of way between the eight sites along the trail are marked by 'way markers' to keep you on the right path.

Over two hundred miners from South Moor and Quaking Houses were killed in the First World War. Their names are engraved at the gates of the First World War Memorial Park. The Heritage Trail marks the former colliery houses in which they lived with a fallen soldier plaque - can you find them in the colliery terraces?

